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23 August 1966

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN

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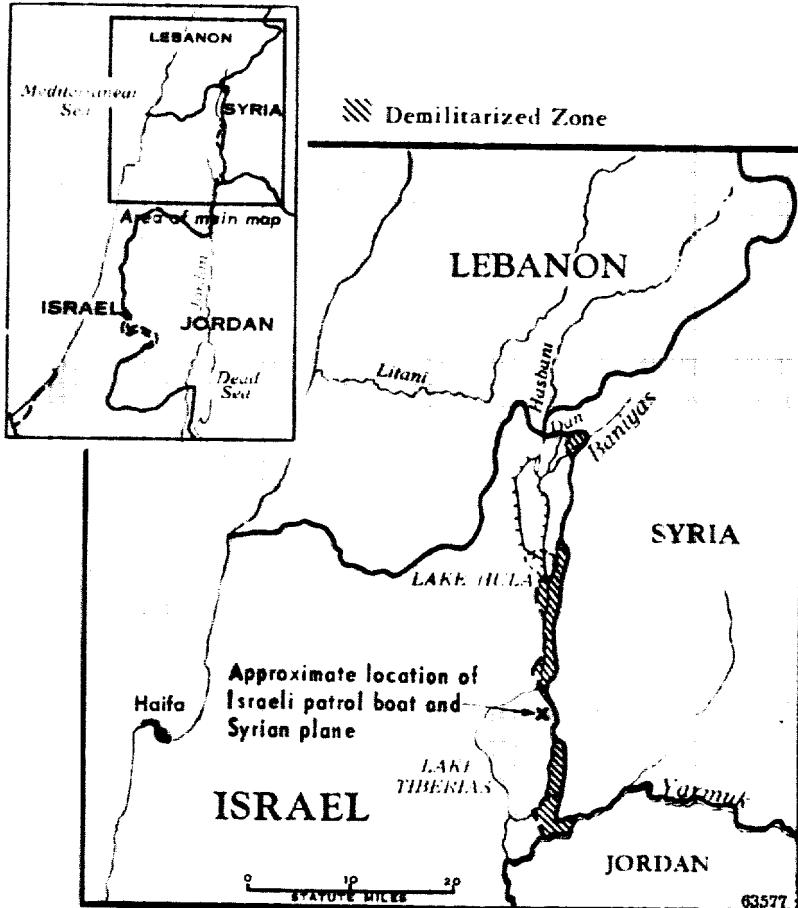
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Syria-Israel: [A major Syrian-Israeli clash may develop despite efforts to head it off.]

[The immediate issue is a disagreement over salvaging the Israeli patrol boat and the Syrian MIG-17 involved in the clash over Lake Tiberias on 15 August. Although both the boat and the plane lie in waters under Israeli control, Syria last week threatened military action if Israel attempted to salvage the boat without allowing Syria to retrieve the plane. Nevertheless, the Israelis began "salvage type" operations on 21 August, (See Map)]

[Syrian military forces were earlier reported to have been substantially reinforced on the Israeli border in the last few days, and Israeli aircraft have been placed on alert.]

[UN officials have tried to deter the Syrians from any military action. Yesterday, Syrian Foreign Minister Makhus reiterated that Syria would retaliate with "full force" against any further aggression regardless of the consequences. His statement might be a prelude to military action, but his language opens the possibility, at least, that the Syrians may let the immediate crisis pass.]

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Brazil: Conservative leader Carlos Lacerda has called for unified opposition to President Castello Branco's regime.

In two published letters Lacerda, a volatile leader of the 1964 revolution, warned that if the revolution were not "renovated," Communism would be its eventual successor. He dismissed hope for improvement under retired Marshal Costa e Silva, who as the government's candidate is expected to be elected president on 3 October. Lacerda previously had refrained from attacking Costa e Silva, hoping perhaps to come to terms with him after the election.

Lacerda's new attacks come when the government is already under fire from almost all political and economic sectors. He may sense that the time is right for an attempt to establish his qualifications for leading the growing but amorphous opposition to the present regime. Lacerda may believe he can precipitate a crisis by forcing the government to make a martyr of him.

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NOTES

UK-Rhodesia: [British and Rhodesian officials have resumed talks in Salisbury with scant prospects for an early solution. London is reported to be willing to recognize the independence of a white minority government in Salisbury if Rhodesia will temporarily return to nominal British rule and will guarantee African rights and electoral progress. Salisbury, however, has not been willing to meet these demands and the British Government seems determined to continue economic sanctions in the hope that the Rhodesians' resolve will eventually weaken.]

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Brazil-USSR: Brazil has rebuffed a pro forma Soviet demarche seeking support for the USSR's policy on Vietnam. Foreign Minister Magalhaes informed the US Embassy that when the Soviet ambassador warned him that the war could escalate into a world conflict, he replied that in that event Brazil could be counted on to take an active part on the US side. The foreign minister also stated that President Castello Branco concurred in his response. This is the farthest Brazilian leaders have gone in expressing privately their pro-US sentiments over the issue.

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